

Restructuring for Mission

Guidelines for a congregation wishing to consider being incorporated into the Diocese as a local Church

The move from being a parish to being a local church enables a congregation to develop a simpler and more efficient administrative structure. Local churches are an important part of the local mission of our diocese and play a role in all aspects of diocesan life.

As a local church your assets will be administered directly by the diocese. You will be expected to be represented at the annual Conference of Local Churches, at which you will help elect synod representatives and discuss matters which local churches hold in common.

The regulations concerning the formation of Local Churches are contained in Statute 3, and, in particular, there are three areas which need consideration. These are outlined below.

The first step in the process of becoming a local church is for the church to provide information concerning each of these three key areas to the Diocese and then to meet with the Bishop. This will then enable a decision to be made as to whether being a local church is a feasible proposition, or whether some other option may need to be considered.

1 General Responsibilities of a Local Church

Statute 3, Clause 4, describes the responsibilities of a Local Church as:

- a) To promote the worship of God, the Holy Trinity
- b) To proclaim the good news of the Kingdom of God
- c) To teach, baptise and nurture believers in the Christian faith within the Anglican tradition
- d) To respond to human need by loving service
- e) To seek to transform the unjust structures of society
- f) To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and to sustain and renew the life of the earth
- g) In accordance with Clause E2 of the Constitution (Te Pouhere), to function on the basis of partnership with Te Pihopatanga o Aotearoa and the Diocese of Polynesia and their constituent parts.

Clause 81 further specifically requires that “Every Local Church shall have responsibility to make provision for regular public services of worship.”

Please prayerfully consider the extent to which your church is able to fulfil these responsibilities.

You will need to be able to provide, at your meeting with the bishop, a proposed schedule of worship and other activities for the year ahead which fulfil at least some of these responsibilities.

2 Financial Responsibilities of a Local Church

Statute 3, Clause 60, requires a Local Church to “submit an annual budget for approval to the Diocesan Council and Bishop”. The Sixth Schedule then requires Diocesan Council to consider “whether the formation of the proposed Local Church will further the mission of the Church in this Diocese” and “whether the proposal is a financially viable one”.

Clause 15 provides that “The Diocesan Office shall have responsibility for administering a Local Church’s finances”. It was agreed at Synod this year that accounting services provided by the Diocesan Office would be charged to the faith communities concerned.

Please provide a proposed budget for the year ahead. A template and example is provided. Note that the template includes the minimum accounting charge and an estimated audit charge and Diocesan contribution.

3 Appointment of a Ministry Leader and Churchwarden

Each Local Church is required to have a Ministry Leader and a Churchwarden (this can be the same person).

Ministry Leader:

Statute 3, Clause 72 (b) states that “A Ministry Leader must be licensed as a Ministry Leader by the Bishop (but need not be ordained).” The responsibilities of a Ministry Leader are set out in Clause 75 and include:

- a) To provide spiritual leadership to the community, and to promote the spreading of the Christian faith within the Anglican tradition;
- b) To provide a link between the Local Church and the wider church, representing the vision of the Bishop and the Diocese to the people, and the vision of the people to the Bishop and the Diocese.

Churchwarden:

The responsibilities of the churchwarden(s) are set out in Clause 38 and include (note that the following is an abbreviated selection from Clause 38):

- a) To be the lay leaders of their faith community
- e) To have the superintendence of the buildings, furniture and equipment
- f) To ensure the provision of all things required for public worship, and the preservation of order during services
- g) To call general meetings
- h) To ensure that there is a proper system of accounting...and that all financial liabilities and responsibilities are duly discharged
- i) To ensure the keeping of records and making of returns
- j) To present a budget to the Annual General Meeting
- l) To ensure that there are strong links between the Local Church and the Diocese and the Bishop.

The responsibilities of these two positions should not be taken lightly. Please consider who would be suitable to fill these roles.

Please return the attached budget and questionnaire to the Diocesan Office, P O Box 13170, Green Island, Dunedin 9052 or scan and email to the Diocesan Registrar, Debbie Flintoff, debbie@calledsouth.org.nz who will arrange the next step in the process.